

REPORTS  
OF THE  
SELECTMEN, TREASURER,  
AND  
SCHOOL COMMITTEE  
OF THE  
TOWN OF MERRIMACK,  
FOR THE  
YEAR ENDING MARCH 1, 1879.

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NASHUA:  
M. V. B. GREENE, PRINTER, STATIONER AND BINDER  
1879.



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# REPORT OF THE SELECTMEN

FOR THE

Year Ending March 1, 1879.

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## HIGHWAYS AND BRIDGES.

R. H. Center, work on highways,	\$8 55
William T. Parker, " "	4 75
George A. Merrill, " "	6 30
John L. Read, " "	10 92
Newton McClure,	28 25
Reuben Barns,	35 46
Samuel Humphrey,	1 50
Richard Fretts,	4 56
George A. Merrill,	1 20
John Goodwin,	15 60
Thomas O'Conner,	19 82
Rufus Blood,	30 31
George E. Patterson,	40 00
George W. Moulton,	18 00
Henry A. Lawrence,	19 55
H. Scott Fields,	34 85
T. F. Palmer,	20 00
R. H. Center,	37 38
Thomas O'Conner,	6 75
H. F. Herrick,	54 31

Joséph Cross, work on highways,	\$13 12
A. C. Darrab, " "	9 00
James W. Longa, " "	8 39
Isaac C. Shedd, " "	1 75
John McGilvery, " "	18 75
Henry F. Herrick, " "	22 90
R. H. Center, " "	29 85
W. H. Eayers, " "	2 32
William P. Melvin, " "	33 00
H. Scott Fields, " "	8 36
George C. Ingalls, " "	32 14
Z. G. Perry, " "	28 77
Carmi M. Parker, " "	39 90
David Barnes, " "	28 00
George E. Patterson, " "	12 59
T. F. Palmer, " "	17 45
David T. Jones, " "	14 62
E. P. Parkhurst, " "	21 20
J. G. Read, cutting ice at watering trough,	2 00
Wyman B. Knight, work on highway at Darrab bridge,	16 88
Charles F. Read, work on highway near Parker's shop,	16 12
Joseph Mellette, getting out stone and laying wall near Parker's shop,	26 43
Thomas W. Herbert, work on highway near Parker's shop,	3 30
John O. Brine, do.	10 87
George H. Cushon, do.	4 50
Josiah Seaverns, snowing bridge,	2 25
Weston & Stevens, use of derrick,	5 00
E. D. Franklin, work on highway,	15 00
George H. Bixby, for freight on stone for Souhegan bridge,	2 00



E. W. Emerson, stone for Souhegan bridge,	\$24 40
Wilson R. Blood, drawing stone for Darrah bridge,	9 00
William W. Huntoon, work on Darrah bridge,	9 68
Daniel Jones, work on highway,	42 86
T. J. Foster, bridge plank,	6 24
H. F. Herrick, work at Souhegan bridge,	32 20
George H. Cushon, work on same,	2 25
H. W. Wilson, work on highway near Parker's shop,	22 63
Z. G. Perry, breaking roads,	5 45
T. F. Palmer,                    "	2 30
Fred W. Bowers,               "	3 00
Fessenden & Lowell, lumber for bridges and work on highway and bridge,	100 91
David Barnes, work on highway,	27 00
Charles Grater,               "	5 00
Harrison F. Greene,           "	15 00
Aaron Mears, work on Souhegan bridge,	2 98
	———— \$1,155 42

#### GENERAL EXPENSES.

M. V. B. Greene, town reports, check lists, and book,	\$43 75
Warren W. Pillsbury, reporting births and deaths,	3 00
George A. Drew, damage to carriage,	4 25
William C. Nesmith, part pay for collecting taxes in 1877,	15 00
Same, in 1878,	30 00

H. W. Wilson, pipe and laying same for watering trough,	\$14 80
H. W. Wilson, for Stevens & Parker, for advice in 1877-8,	31 50
J. L. Spalding, for school committee,	12 00
M. V. B. Greene, book ; stationery,	11 40
G. A. Merrill, watering trough, '77-8,	6 00
Heirs of Sally Thornton, for land to widen road,	5 00
John G. Reed, digging ditch for wa- ter pipe,	4 65
C. M. Parker, expenses of the Gage fund,	15 69
John. L. Spalding, for watering place,	3 00
S. C. Anderson, for books, oil, and street lamp,	11 57
Matthew P. Nichols, salary as Treas- urer,	40 00
Harriet N. Eaton, " " Supt. School Com.,	60 00
Benjamin Ela, salary as Town Clerk,	30 00
Horace W. Wilson, " " Selectman,	140 00
Levi F. Lowell, "	85 00
George E. Patterson, "	78 00
Benj. Ela, postage, stationery, fee to record deeds, and books and work on same,	10 35
Levi F. Lowell, expenses to Boston and cash paid out,	6 50
H. W. Wilson, postage, stationery, and cash paid out,	4 75
Levi F. Lowell, bounty on foxes and hawks,	16 00
Francis A. Gordon, auditor,	2 00
John H. Bowers, "	2 00



J. B. Elliott, blacksmithing,	\$4 25	
H. W. Wilson, use of horse,	20 00	
Frank A. Chamberlin, making water- ing trough,	2 00	
	<hr/>	\$711 96

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### COUNTY POOR.

W. W. Pillsbury, doctor's bill for the poor,	\$10 00	
Hosea Evans, board of Mrs. Hildreth,	46 90	
A. J. Rockwood, coffin for Henderson child,	3 60	
Frank P. Jones, funeral of Henderson child,	3 00	
H. W. Wilson, aid for the poor,	4 40	
Seth Mitchell, car fare to Canada for C. Hunter,	8 05	
George E. Patterson, cash paid for moving Mrs. Hildreth,	15 00	
H. W. Wilson, aid for J. E. Fields,	11 00	
	<hr/>	\$101 95

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### TOWN POOR.

H. W. Wilson, aid for Mrs. King,	\$25 00	
Lucinda Smith, allowance for care and board,	120 00	
John E. Morse, care of tramps for 1877-8,	103 50	
George E. Patterson, do.,	30 00	
G. G. Bumpus for board of H. J. Tru- ell at county farm,	64 66	
G. G. Bumpus for board of Stearns and wife and child,	94 95	

George E. Patterson, for school books for the poor,	\$2 60	
H. W. Wilson, cash paid out for pumps,	3 25	
— Blanchard, care of tramps,	2 00	
M. A. Greene, for board of Mrs. Sullivan and child, & goods furnish'd,	37 08	
	— — — —	\$483 04

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TOMB.

E. W. Emerson, stone for tomb,	\$54 80	
F. A. Chamberlin, work on tomb,	9 72	
J. F. & J. Marden, mason work on tomb,	53 97	
Wilson R. Blood, drawing stone for tomb,	3 00	
Powers & Clark, slate for tomb and laying the same,	24 82	
E. & J. Kittridge, brick for tomb,	54 00	
John O'Brine, labor at tomb,	12 75	
L. M. Ham, door for tomb,	36 00	
John G. Read, painting tomb,	75	
George H. Bixby, freight on stone,	4 00	
H. F. Herrick, drawing stone,	3 00	
David Barnes, work on stone for tomb,	7 00	
Aaron Mears, work on tomb,	4 87	
J. B. Elliott, work on tomb,	1 70	
Fessenden & Lowell, lime, cement, lumber, and work on tomb,	33 17	
	— — — —	\$303 55

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TRAMP HOUSE.

Merrill Bros., lumber for tramp house, \$10 44

Frank A. Chamberlin, for shingles, nails, and work on tramp house,	36 88	
Fessenden & Lowell, lumber for tramp house,	35 99	
	<hr/>	\$83 81

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ABATEMENTS.

Joseph Watkins, abatement on dog,	\$ 1 00	
John Harris, " of poll tax of 1876-7,	1 60	
Charles Bean, " " "	1 00	
Pennichuck Water Co., over-assess- ment,	2 40	
William C. Nesmith, abatement of tax list of 1877,	19 82	
John L. Read, error in tax,	10 00	
	<hr/>	\$35 82

Most respectfully submitted.

HORACE W. WILSON,  
LEVI F. LOWELL,  
GEORGE E. PATTERSON,  
*Selectmen of Merrimack.*

Merrimack, March 1, 1879.

We have examined the above accounts, and find them  
correctly cast and properly vouched.

F. A. GORDON,  
JOHN H. BOWERS.  
*Auditors of Merrimack.*

Merrimack, March 1, 1879.



# TREASURER'S REPORT.

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*Town of Merrimack in Account with M. P. Nichols, Treas.*

CR.

By cash on hand March 1, 1878,	\$31 18
Balance deposit account in Manches- ter Savings Bank, exclusive of interest, March 1, 1878,	1600 77
Cash of E. W. French, interest on tax list, 1876,	3 25
Cash of W. E. Nesmith, interest on tax list 1877,	15 95
Cash of W. E. Nesmith, balance of his tax list 1877,	944 86
Cash of W. E. Nesmith, collected on his list 1878,	3,824 26
Cash received of County for support of paupers,	90 55
Cash of Wm. Goodwin per town note,	600 00
Cash received on Mrs. Smith's bank book,	8 80
Cash received of King Bridge Co. for old lumber,	4 00
Cash received of Dist. No. 7, school money over drawn 1877,	9 55
Cash of State Treasurer as Railroad tax,	751 04

Cash of State Treasurer as Savings	
Bank tax,	\$1,315 86
Cash of State Treasurer as Literary	
Fund,	82 51
	————— \$9,282 58

DR.

To paid town orders drawn current	
year 1877,	\$286 28
Paid orders drawn current year 1878,	2,354 84
Paid Dist. No. 3, balance school money	
for 1877,	141 03
Paid balance school house tax Dist.	
No. 3,	5 14
Paid School house tax Dist. No. 12,	
1878,	40 00
Paid County Treasurer for County tax	
1878,	1,199 95
Paid King Bridge Co. for iron bridge,	1,200 00
Paid interest on Harris note,	16 17
Paid agents for the several school Dis-	
tricts 1878,	1,685 61
Paid State Treasurer, State Tax 1878,	1,544 00
Balance of deposit account in Manches-	
ter Savings Bank, exclusive of	
interest, March 1st, 1879,	800 82
Cash on hand March 1st, 1879,	8 74
	————— \$9,282 58

## FINANCIAL STANDING OF THE TOWN

MARCH 1, 1879.

## LIABILITIES.

Note due Mrs. Eliza Wilson, includ-	
ing interest,	855 95

Note due Reuben Barnes, and interest,	260	82	
“ “ Amos Harris, “ “	516	88	
“ “ William Goodwin, “	613	60	
Unpaid orders drawn current year '75,	4	21	
“ “ “ “ “ '78,	530	21	
Balance school money due Dist. No. 8,	8	52	
			————— \$2,790 19

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### ASSETS.

Balance of deposits in Manchester Sav-			
ings Bank, exclusive of interest			
March 1, 1879,	\$	800	82
Dividend of interest on bank account,	118	46	
Due from W. C. Nesmith, collector,			
1878,	1,713	79	
Cash on hand, March 1, 1879,	8	74	
Balance against the town,	148	38	
			————— \$2,790 19

M. P. NICHOLS,

*Town Treasurer.*

Merrimack, March 1, 1879.

We have examined the above report of the Treasurer of the town of Merrimack, and find it correctly cast and properly vouched.

F. A. GORDON,  
JOHN H. BOWERS.

*Auditors.*

Merrimack, March 1, 1879.



# SCHOOL REPORT.

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## DISTRICT NO. 1.

L. McIntire, Agent.  
S. E. Lawrence, } Teachers.  
F. E. Hunt, }

## DISTRICT NO. 2.

R. Fretts, Agent.  
F. E. Brown, Teacher.

## DISTRICT NO. 3.

W. H. Kempton, Agent.  
F. A. Darrah, Teacher.

## DISTRICT NO. 4.

T. B. Knight, } Agents.  
J. L. Spalding, }  
L. A. Bowers, Teacher.

## DISTRICT NO. 5.

L. T. Eustis, Agent.  
A. M. Lakin, } Teachers.  
A. D. Hutchinson, }

## DISTRICT NO. 6.

R. H. Center, Agent.

C. L. Norton, Teacher.

## DISTRICT NO. 7.

J. W. Fosdick, Agent.

L. A. Wilkins, Teacher.

## DISTRICT NO. 8.

H. T. I. Blood, Agent.

H. McMillen, Teacher.

## DISTRICT NO. 9.

G. H. Bixby, Agent.

L. Center, Teacher.

## DISTRICT NO. 10.

J. S. Conrey, Agent.

M. A. Walker, } Teachers.

C. M. Crooker, }

## DISTRICT NO. 11.

T. F. Palmer, Agent.

M. A. Bowers, Teacher.

## DISTRICT NO. 12.

G. E. Patterson, Agent.

F. J. Bullard, Teacher.

# R E P O R T .

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The present condition of our schools merits the concern of every thoughtful citizen. Situated between two cities that are steadily advancing to higher educational rank, it is well that we ask, "What is Merrimack doing?" If she cannot keep even step with Manchester, and Nashua, and Boston, ought she not, at least, to set her face in the same general direction?

The question is often asked, "Are not our schools as good as those of other country towns?"

There are better country schools than ours in the immediate neighborhood, and if there are those which are inferior, should we not have the self respect and the ambition to set an example of what country schools may become, when the best men and women in the community join hands, and are co-workers for their up-building?

We need not be told that our common schools underlie, and are the foundation of our commonwealth; that no superstructure can long remain if its foundations are unsound.

The remark has become trite, but let us try to grasp, and realize its forceful meaning.

A few miles out from our eastern coast,—upon a dangerous, sunken ledge, a noble light-house rears itself amid the waves. Forty feet above the foaming breakers, where our little boat lies tossing, we enter, and as we ascend the spiral stairway within, we admiringly exclaim, "What strength is here!" The lofty turret seems one mass of solid granite, fit to defy the winds and storms of coming centuries; well-built to laugh at the tempests of all future time.



But, at the top, we pause. The great, crystal panes that surround the wonderful Fresnell light, are cracked ! Long lines of fracture mar their otherwise translucent beauty. "How is this?" we ask of the guide. And the reply comes : —"This light-house stands upon *shale*. In 1851, an iron tower, with its two keepers, was swept from this very site, and destroyed. It is only a question of time ; this, too, must go."

The district school is the spring, the feeder of our higher institutions. In it, if anywhere, the desire will be aroused, and the resolve confirmed, to gain a more liberal education than can be acquired in schools of this class. Reasonably, then, in a town where we note a large number of educated men rallying to centennial, and other home-comings, we may infer, that in the past, her public schools have been uplifted, and kept, far above the depressing influence of political strife or of mercenary greed.

Now, as we are asked "to compare ourselves with ourselves," let us have the candor to contemplate a most significant fact.

We must look back through sixty-seven years, to 1812,—to find the name of one of our native-born sons upon the graduating roll of Dartmouth College, and, while we are credited with four, three other towns of southern New Hampshire, boast respectively of thirty-five, twenty, and eighteen Alumni.

We may delight ourselves with observing here and there the substantial barns that have been erected within the last few years. We admire their generous interior arrangements, planned with a view to the comfort of the lambs, and of the calves. Here has been progress in the right direction, and with no sacrifice of economy. The wise and thrifty farmer, the good manager, knows, that, in replacing the tumble-down and rotten, with the secure and commodious, he has made good financial investment.

Turning from the stable to the school-house, we may find what has been done for our human animals; what a loving adaptation has effected for the wants of the tender lambs of our household flock.

With rare exceptions, a most striking contrast awaits us. Several of the buildings should be reported "unfit for school purposes;" while as regards outline-maps, globes, reference and text-books, blackboards, charts and other illustrative apparatus, there is either a total lack, or the most limited supply. Should the minutiae of the absolute needs of our schools be detailed here, the cheek of the more intelligent citizen should glow with shame.

A glance at the registers, or an inspectory tour will give an impression of abject poverty or of shameful niggardness. Whatever the old school-house had, perhaps thirty or forty years since, it has to-day, only that, and nothing more. There is little connected with it, or its surroundings which is likely to make school-life seem winsome and attractive to eyes just opening upon it. There are geographical reasons which affect us as a community most unfavorably. Neither socially, religiously nor intellectually is there entire concert between our four villages. There is little cohesion, and consequently there is slow progress.

Taking this fact largely into account our present low educational estate, may be judged as being the result of a certain system, or way of administering school affairs. We have to-day the consummate flower and fruit of the District system in this locality. It has had a long and fair trial. We have grown up under it, and are slow to make war upon it; but, whatever may be said theoretically in its favor, it is safe to affirm that for this town and for this time, there is a better way.

The conduct of the schools is mainly in the hands of the Prudential Committee-men. Many of our best men have served in that capacity, and worthy men are still found

faithfully performing the duties of the office, but of late years there has sometimes been boy's play at the annual school meetings, from which our responsible citizens have largely absented themselves, and the Agents have too often been ignorant and irresponsible men. The Prudential Committee-men do not constitute an organized body. Rarely, it is presumed, do two of them confer relative to school interests, save to form a coalition to thwart the exercise of the power which the law places in the hands of the School Committee, and it has come to pass that persons competent to discharge the duties of superintendent most unwillingly accept the office. In some most important respects the District system is woefully deficient. A chief want is that of ~~an~~ <sup>an</sup> Examining Board, before which all candidates wishing to teach in town should appear on a certain day appointed some two weeks before the opening of the schools. The examination should be conducted by means of written questions, after deliberate review of which, certificates and appointments might be issued to successful competitors. Under such an arrangement the troubles in Districts No's. 3 and 8 could not have occurred.

The money raised by taxation this year for the support of the schools amounts to the sum of one thousand five hundred and fifty-one dollars; this being the largest assessment levied upon the town which is applied to any one purpose. If the present order of things continues there should be a law providing for the honest disbursement of this fund.

Prolific of neighborhood prejudices, of local broils and their attendant waste, wholly inadequate to the needs of a progressive community, let this people "shuffle off" this clogging system—become intelligent as to the merits of the Town system under which Massachusetts schools are prospering, and adopt that or some modification of it, without delay.

Important practical questions should come up at once for adjudication.



The question of the consolidation of certain districts is one of these. A large-minded and liberal policy is the best, every way. When Merrimack shall "rise from the dust and put on her beautiful garments" it will be that she is known and well-spoken of both at home and abroad for her excellent schools. There are flaws at *the top of our best things*: let us *strengthen the foundations*.

To quote from the School Report for 1877: "Our schools have prospered during the year as well as could be expected under the present system."

Tested by results, there has been great difference in the work accomplished by the teachers. Some have wrought nobly, but, under more favorable conditions, all would have labored more satisfactorily.

No good can be attained by attempting discriminating personal criticism.

Two or three general principles should be noted here.—The *hand* should be educated. Some degree of manual skill should be the result of public school training.

Exhibitions should be disconnected from the school-term. Late hours imperil the health; the reflex influence upon the actors is often bad.

The sweet shyness of childhood, once gone, returns never.

Haste not to flaunt infantile or youthful graces before the public eye.

Moreover, if the schools give exhibitions, it must be at the expense of their vitality.

Your Committee has examined teachers; has held one Teachers' meeting, at which all the teachers were present; has spent several days in visiting schools in other places; has made an indefinite number of calls, and sixty-three official visits.

Respectfully submitted,

H. N. EATON,

*School Committee.*

Merrimack, March 1, 1879.

## STATISTICAL TABLE.

Number of District.	Terms.	Length of School in Weeks.	Wages of Teacher per month, including Board.	Whole number of Scholars.	Average Attendance.	Visits by Prudential Committee.	Amount of Money.
1	1	8	\$24 00	6	6	0	\$119 09
1	2	11	22 00	12	10	1	
2	1	9	20 00	16	15X	1	126 50
2	2	14	21 00	16	15X	1	
3	1	8	35 00	18	16X	1	303 30
3	2	10	35 00	16	13X	1	
3	3	12	35 00	14	10X	1	
4	1	9	16 00	18	17	0	185 54
4	2	10	16 00	22	16	1	
4	3	13	26 00	24	17X	0	
5	1	10	22 00	14	12.97	0	128 36
5	2	8	22 00	14	12.80	0	
5	3	10	22 00	15	12.98	0	
6	1	8	14 00	12	11X	0	141 55
6	2	9	14 00	16	15X	0	
6	3	11	26 00	20	19X	0	
7	1	8	22 00	24	21X	1	146 23
7	2	13	27 00	24	20X	0	
8	1	20	20 00	13	11	1	120 52
9	1	8	25 00	20	19	0	144 14
9	2	14	25 00	23	16	0	
10	1	8	21 00	11	9	1	93 33
10	2	9	21 00	13	12	0	
11	1	10	20 00	4	4	0	132 99
11	2	14	20 00	3	3	1	
12	1	11	24 00	21	20.91	0	159 39
12	2	14	24 00	19	17.72	0	





